

# THE VIATORIAN.

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## AN INSTRUMENT.

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Oftimes a merry laughing lass  
Hath played upon my heart,  
And fingered it so sweetly that  
I wished we ne'er would part,  
    But then she'd vanish like a toy  
    This rippling one who's name is Joy.

Another oft would take her place  
But chill the instrument,  
So cold and trembling was her touch  
As o'er it she hath bent,  
    To give, indeed, but little cheer  
    This trembling one who's name is Fear.

Full oft hath Anger passed this way  
And smote it with her arm,  
And Sorrow followed with cold hands  
Which gave a little balm,  
    And brought forth sad tho' sweeter strain  
    Than when t'was swept by Passions flame.

But now it gives a melody  
Which sounds all night and day,  
For lo! a great musician came  
Who doth divinely play,  
    I'm sure she's sent from heaven above  
    This gentle one whose name is Love.

*J. H. N.*

THE IMAGINATIVE POWER OF DANTE.

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Poetry is the language of the imagination and of the passions. There is no poetry without feeling and imagery. The poet's soul must, like an aeolian harp, vibrate at the least breath of human sentiment. It must express exquisite feeling. The imagination of the poet must be like an artist, ready to call forth and paint vividly scenes that speak to the soul and appeal to the heart—scenes that rouse to terror and affright, pity and sadness—scenes that will so enrapture the soul in ecstasies of contemplation that the very remembrance of them will thrill us with everlasting delight.

I will not ask, has Dante these qualifications of the poet; but I at once affirm that he possesses them all in an eminent degree. Some poets have chosen themes where, as in smiling meadows, the imagination flits about sipping pleasure from every flower. Here are the natural elements in which the imagination revels. All the poet needs do is to allow this frail-winged creature to escape from its prison and it will dance to the music of the purling stream, rest on the mossy bank, or flit about in the pleasant sunshine. In the matter of sentiment to touch the strings of the heart is the comparatively easy task of a poet who chooses as his subject such passions as love, desire or hope. But, as he who changes the desert wastes into smiling plains, or clothes the rocky slopes with verdant gardens, performs a more worthy task, than he who merely scatters the seeds of plenty into the lap of nature, so Dante, who has clothed the abstruse principles of philosophy and theology in such a manner as to cut down the barrier which deep thought raises against the imagination, has given this faculty a scope which can be claimed by no other poet. In the lurid flames of hell he paints sin in all its ugliness; while God's infinite but terrible justice finds expression in every sigh, in every groan, in every shriek, in a word in that indescribable uproar of misery with which the abyssmal depths resound. In the sad plains of purgatory God's purity stands as vividly before the imagination as the lily of our earthly valleys appears to our bodily eyes. Souls whose brightness dazzles are laved in crystal streams; while others whose stains are grosser are purified within the fiery furnace. Here, too, we see the bright flame of hope, never flickering, always becoming brighter and brighter until it is absorbed in the divine effulgence. In the "Paradiso" Dante has all but lifted the veil from that which



the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive."

Sufficient has been said to prove the difficulties which Dante's imagination had to surmount. Let us now see how he has succeeded. We can get a glimpse of the grand edifice which his powerful imagination reared on the profound rock of his reason, from the following quotation: "Take the picture of that land of terror and gloom, with its hail and snow and roaring winds, with its grim and savage landscapes, its forests of gnarled trees, its burning plains and valleys of desolation, the whole overhung with its clouds of inky blackness, rent and made lurid with its jets of red light or by flickering tongues of flame; or that other picture, as beautiful as it is made terrible, with its soft landscapes lying in peaceful loveliness beneath tender skies, with its verdurous valleys and delightful groves, musical with the sweet singing of birds, or still again that third vision, so dazzling that it hardly leaves a picture in the memory, but the effect of which is like heavenly melody or the impression that comes upon a man standing at midnight on the snowy summit of some Alpine mountain, with face upturned to the stars shining above him. In these pictures, as in the countless details which go to make them up, can be seen the power of Dante's imagination."

What a dark, forbidding picture the poet draws of the environs of hell; a gloomy forest alive with the howlings of savage beasts maddened with hunger's pangs; "even the very air is fear-struck."

Look at the awful portals with its terrible inscription written in letters of fire:

"Through me you pass into the city of woe;  
Through me you pass into eternal pain;  
Through me among the people lost for aye.  
Before me things create were none, save things  
Eternal, and eternal I endure.  
All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

What a lasting image these words burn upon the memory. How they prepare the mind for the terrible things which follow. It shows what a splendid imagination Dante had at the service of his penetrating intellect. No sooner is the threshold crossed than the terrible import of these words is flashed across the mind.



"Here sighs, with lamentations and loud moans,  
 Resound through the air pierced by no star,  
 \*       \*       \*       \*       Various tongues,  
 Horrible languages, outcries of woe,  
 Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,  
 With hands together smote that swell'd the sounds,  
 Made up a tumult that forever whirls  
 Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,  
 Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies."

This picture is blended with another, which in turn is united with another and so, one by one, the master touch of the poet gives expression to the various punishments which are here meted out to the different classes of sinners. We cannot but admire how artfully these scenes are woven into one grand masterpiece. Each fits exactly the place assigned to it in the original plan. There is no disproportion, but, like the different details of a beautiful landscape, each occupies the place most natural for it.

The suitableness and the variety of the sufferings inflicted on the different kinds of sinners is also worthy of notice. In describing the circle in which are punished the carnal sinners "in whom reason by lust is swayed," the poet says:

\*       \*       \*       \*       "Into a place I came  
 Where light was silent all. Bellowing there groan'd  
 A noise, as of a sea in tempest torn  
 By warring winds. The stormy blast of hell  
 With restless fury drives the spirits on,  
 Whirl'd round and dash'd amain with sore annoy.

\*       \*       \*       "As in large troops  
 And multitudinous, when winter reigns,  
 The starlings on their wings are borne abroad;  
 So bears the tyrannous gust those evil souls.  
 On this side and on that, above, below,  
 It drives them; hope of rest to solace them  
 Is none, nor e'en of milder pang."

The souls of tyrants, "who were given to blood and rapine, are punished in

"An ample foss, that in a bow was bent,  
 As circling all the plain       \*       \*       \*  
 \*       \*       \*       Between it and the rampart's base,  
 On trail ran Centaurs with keen arrows arm'd,  
 As to the chase they on earth were wont.

\*       \*       \*       \*       "Around  
 The foss these go by thousands, aiming shafts  
 At whatsoever spirit dares emerge.



From out the blood, more than his guilt allows.  
 Some there I mark'd as high as to their brow  
 Immersed.       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
 A race I next espied who held the head,  
 And even all the bust, above the stream.  
 Thus shallow more and more the blood became,  
 So that at last it but imbrued the feet."

No comments need be made on the graphic description of the punishment inflicted on those who have done violence to themselves:

"When departs  
 The fierce soul from the body, by itself  
 Thence torn assunder, to the seventh gulf  
 By Minos doom'd, into the wood it falls,  
 No place assign'd but wheresoever chance  
 Hurls it; there sprouting, as a grain of spelt,  
 It rises to a sapling, growing thence  
 A savage plant. The Harpies, on its leaves  
 Then feeding, cause both pain, and for the pain  
 A vent to grief. We, as the rest, shall come  
 For our own spoils, yet not so that with them  
 We may again be clad: for what a man  
 Takes from himself it is not just he have;  
 Here we perforce shall drag them and throughout  
 The dismal glade our bodies shall be hung,  
 Each on the wild thorn of his wretched shade."

There is something more than brevity, truth and vividness in Dante's paintings. His own noble soul animates them.

Knowing what it is to suffer, he learned how to sympathize, how to touch the tenderest chords of the human heart. As evidence of this we have but to mention the pathetic story that forms the closing scene of the fifth canto of his "Inferno." "Francesca and her lover," says Carlyle, "what qualities in that! A thing woven as out of rainbows, on a ground of eternal black. A small flute voice of infinite wail speaks there, into our very heart of hearts. A touch of womanhood in it, too, and how even in the pit of woe, it is a solace that he will never part from her. Saddest tragedy in these deep caverns. And the racking winds whirl them away again, to wail forever."

J. P. MAHONEY, '01

*To be continued.*



THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

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Perhaps the tendencies of the English novel have never been more conflicting than in the eighteenth century, for then were manifest their "native brutality and intense reflection." As it is natural for every combat to result in victory and defeat, this was not an exception. So after a sharp and prolonged struggle, reflection in the noble hands of Goldsmith won the contest, by a masterly depiction of the family of Wakefield. The qualifications of this novel as a work of fiction will not be discussed here, for we would only be concurring in the judgment of able critics, who believe, with Schegel, "The Vicar of Wakefield is the most exquisite of all romances in miniature." But we will content ourselves with relating the principal incidents of the plot, and inserting such passages from the work, as may indicate the literary and moral worth of the novel, as well as the art and character of the writer. The incidents are as simple as the novel is famous.

Dr. Primrose—a minister of the gospel—is a respectable country gentleman, who soon after receiving orders, "chooses a wife, as she did her wedding gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well." She is as educated as might be expected from a country lady, for "she can almost read any English book without much spelling." She prides herself upon being an excellent housekeeper, yet the Vicar "could never find that they grew any richer with all her contrivances." They love each other so tenderly that "nothing could make them angry with the world or each other." All their adventures are by the fireside and all their migrations from the "blue bed to the brown." As they lived near the road, and Mrs. Primrose was famous for making blackberry wine, their cousins even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their "affinity without any help from the herald's office." As they had the blind, the maimed and the halt among their visitors, some of the guests at times became troublesome, and to get rid of such the Dr. gave them some article of dress, or sometimes "a horse of small value," on departing, and he "had the satisfaction of finding that they never came back to return it." the family consisting of two girls and four boys "is the offspring of temperance." The visitors all praise the beauty of the children, to which Mrs. Primrose replies, "They are handsome enough if they be good enough; handsome is what handsome does."



A sort of family likeness prevails among them, "that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple and inoffensive." Their happiness is enviable. "I think myself happier now than the greatest monarch on earth. He has no such fireside, no such pleasant faces about it." Pleasure is generally alloyed with pain. The doctor's happiness is increased by the news that his son George is about to be married to Miss Arbela Wilmot—a lady of rank—whose "youth, health, and innocence, were still heightened by a complexion so transparent, and such a happy sensibility of look, as even age could not gaze on with indifference." But instantly a cloud of depression appears from the fact that "the match is broken off" because the merchant in whose hands the Vicar's money is lodged, escapes to avoid a statute of bankruptcy. The doctor writes treatises on matrimony, which as "they never sold he had the consolation of thinking they were read only by the happy few." The frowns of fortune force him to send George to London, thus breaking up the little circle and suffering "one of the most distressful circumstances attendant on penury."

The preacher is compelled by poverty to abandon his "modest mansion" and resort to a humbler abode. As "happiness depends not on circumstances, but on constitution," even in this obscure situation their comfort is enviable. "Our little habitation was situated at the foot of a sloping hill, sheltered in with a beautiful underwood behind, and a prattling river before; on one side a meadow, on the other a green. My farm consisted of about twenty acres of excellent land, having given a hundred pounds for my predecessor's good will. Nothing could exceed the neatness of my little enclosures; the elms and hedge rows appearing with inexpressible beauty. My house consisted of but one story, and was covered with thatch, which gave it an air of great snugness; the walls on the inside were nicely white-washed, and my daughters undertook to adorn them with pictures of their own designing. Though the same room served us for a parlor and a kitchen, that only made it the warmer. Besides, as it was kept with the utmost neatness, the dishes, plates and coppers being well scoured and all disposed in bright rows on the shelves, the eye was agreeably relieved and did not want richer furniture. There were only three apartments, one for my wife and me, another for our two daughters within our own, and the third with two beds for the rest of the children." Squire Thornhill introduces himself to the family and manifests



a "disproportioned acquaintance," which does not prepossess him in the favor of the Vicar. As the family of Wakefield is becoming an object of esteem to "their betters," the girls contrive to be handsome by art, and "make a wash for the face." The Vicar, having "a natural antipathy for all kinds of washes," approaches the fire whilst the "wash" is undergoing the process of formation, and grasping the poker, "by sly degrees" as if to mend the fire, he overturns the whole composition. Mr. Thornhill visits them again, and "wins the approbation of Deborah (Mrs. Primrose) and my daughter Olivia. Mr. Burchell makes demonstrations of affection to "my daughter Sophia," and after complaining of "the lack of sense in English poetry," introduces a ballad, "The Pilgrim and the Hermit," from which the following verses are taken:

"Here forlorn and lost I (Pilgrim) tread  
With fainting steps and slow;  
Where wilds immeasurably spread,  
Seem lengthening as I go."

Hermit. "Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego;  
All earthborn cares are wrong;  
Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little long."

"A tawny sibyl" of a fortune teller informs Olivia that she will marry a squire, and Sophia that she will enjoy the hand of a lord. After walking to church the girls on going to "their pew look for all the world as if they had been winners at a smock race." So "Deborah persuades me to let the girls ride to church." The two "plough-horses—Wall-eyed Blackberry and the nine-year-old colt without a tail" having "a hundred vicious tricks," stood still when half way to church, and "neither blows nor entreaties could prevail on them to proceed." As the "female part" of the family used to overrule the Vicar, he owns that their "mortification on this occasion did not much displease him, since it gave him means for many a future triumph." "Fortune seems resolved to humble the family of Wakefield again." "Deborah insists upon selling the colt and purchasing a better horse." Moses, being notable for "making good bargains," is sent to the fair by his mother, and returns "with a gross of green spectacles" for the price of the pony.

Mrs. Primrose and the girls are weeping because "their character is aspersed." Livy, who "entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay," a girl having "all that luxuriance of



beauty with which painters draw Hebe," is seduced, "a blow which so overwhelms me that all my earthly happiness is now over."

Returning from a long journey in search of "the lost one" she is "dragged by the hair of the head down a narrow stairs," in an inn where the Vicar is taking a "frugal meal." Notwithstanding her condition her good old father flew to her rescue, exclaiming: "Welcome any way, welcome, my dear lost one. Though thou hadst ten thousand crimes to answer for, I will forget them all."

When reaching home, the first salutation he receives is a volume of flame from his burning dwelling. As his "little ones" are unable to save themselves, he rushes into the crumbling ruin and rescues them, but suffers a serious burn in his right arm. The parishioners furnish him with a humble shelter and some provisions, which act of kindness brings such comfort that once more, "the tale went round, the song was demanded and cheerfulness condescends to hover over the little habitation."

Next morning they breakfast "on the honeysuckle bank," after which act the following favorite verses of the Vicar are sung by Olivia:

"When lovely woman stoops to folly,  
And finds too late that men betray.  
What charm can soothe her melancholy?  
What art can wash her guilt away?

"The only art her guilt to cover,  
To hide her shame from every eye,  
To give repentance to her lover,  
And to wring his bosom—is to die."

On account of debits contracted to defray the unnecessary expenses of his wife and daughters the Vicar is cast into prison, "the society of the wretched." He is more discomfited even here than the other prisoners, for they have a bed, but he has only "a bundle of straw."

Even in this "gloomy mansion" he is "more bent to raise the wretched than to rise," and so resolves to make a "reformation in the jail." Here he is confronted with very discouraging obstacles: "I found each prepared with some jail trick to play upon the doctor. Thus as I was going to begin one turned my wig awry, as if by accident and then asked my pardon. A second who stood at some distance, had a knack of spitting through his teeth, which fell in showers upon my book. A third would



reply amen, in such an affected tone, as gave the rest great delight. A fourth slyly picked my pockets of my spectacles. Yet my patience and perseverance finally enabled me to triumph."

"To make laws complete they should reward as well as punish." So he undertook the institution of "fines for the punishment of immorality and reward for peculiar industry."

His other daughter is seduced, and his son George, "bleeding and fettered," is taken to the prison, in which he himself is confined. His lovely and repentant Livy is sick "unto death."

As his son's crime incurs death, the Vicar calls him and the rest of the prisoners to his bedside, and addresses them on "the equal dealings of Providence demonstrated with regard to the happy and the miserable here below." As he is unable even to sit up on the straw, his wife and his son Moses raise him to a sitting posture and leave him reclined against the wall.

"Happier prospects begin to appear." Mr. Burchell rescues and restores Sophia, and Sir William Thornhill, the uncle of Livy's seducer, looks with sympathy upon the Vicar's distress. Squire Thornhill's wickedness is revealed to Sir William, who liberates George from chains. George is married to his former betrothed. Livy is proven to be the lawful wife of the Squire. All turns out so favorably that the Doctor's "satisfaction seemed scarcely capable of increase." The merchant who had "escaped to avoid the statute of bankruptcy" is arrested in Antwerp, and in his possession are found effects to a much greater amount than is due to his creditors. The Vicar's resignation is now so amply rewarded that his "pleasure was unspeakable. It now only remained that my gratitude in good fortune should excel my former submission in adversity."

Obviously the incidents of this plot are not extraordinary, yet they are so exquisitely linked together and so artistically executed that the work bespeaks the artistic accomplishments of the author.

The few defects observable in this work are like occasional clouds that interfere with the sun's rays without diminishing its splendor. Many say the "Vicar of Wakefield" lacks interest. Probably it reminds such of duties they fail to discharge. Those who read this novel for self-improvement can assert without fear, with Mrs. Barbauld, that "The Vicar of Wakefield is one of the most pleasing novels of modern caste." Or with Sir Walter Scott that "whatever defects occur in the tenor of the story the admirable ease and grace of the narrative, as well as the



pleasing truth with which the principal characters are designed, make the Vicar of Wakefield one of the most delicious morsels of fictitious composition on which the human mind was ever employed."

What inducement to read this tale is held out for all who rely on the judgment of Washington Irving, who says that "its language in the words of an elegant writer is what 'angels might have heard and virgins told.' If the style proclaims the man what praise does Goldsmith deserve for this composition. Does not its perusal serve to convince us of the final triumph of good over evil? Are we not surprised to see that the author has depicted a phase of human life that is instructive for youth and age; encouraging for the virtuous and hopeful for the mass; educative for the prosperous, and consoling for the distressed?"

To stem the current, and hoping even to turn back the stream of censure that flows upon this foremost among moralists we conclude with the words of a judicious critic, which agree with our opinion of Oliver Goldsmith, in so far as we can judge his conduct from the present work: "Verily reason has here taken the helm, and it has taken it without oppressing other feelings; a rare and excellent spectacle, which unites and harmonizes in one character the best features of the manners and morals of the time and country."

P. J. GERAGHTY, '01.

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#### WEBSTER'S FIRST BUNKER HILL ORATION.

This is unquestionably the greatest demonstrative oration Webster ever delivered. It is a masterpiece of oratory in which are displayed superior abilities in the handling of this great and noble art.

The end of this memorable oration—no less than the monument itself—was to fittingly commemorate the glory and honor of the heroes of Bunker Hill, and to impress in every heart a deep veneration for them as the first among the oppressed nation to raise the standard of liberty and to defend it at the cost of their generous lives; moreover, to excite in all an inexhaustible devotion towards their country, bought at the price of so great sacrifices; and lastly, to impress in the souls of all succeeding generations a spirit of ardent patriotism worthy of their glorious ancestors.

It is with a calm and pathetic apostrophe to the venerable survivors of the famous battle that the orator enters upon his noble subject.



With what forcible eloquence he exposes the hard, tempestuous and hopeless conditions of the nation before the Revolution and especially when the dark cloud of war had at last spread over it! But also with what joyful feelings he exhibits the country's present prosperity and happiness, won by the patriotic toils of those self-devoting hearts who now rejoice at the sight of this rising monument emblem of their valor and of liberty!

With what sentiments of sympathy and gratitude he recalls in particular the illustrious names of those who fell on this consecrated spot and who now slumber in the grave that drank in profusion their generous blood! A most worthy representation of the survivors of Monmouth, Trenton, Saratoga, etc., their daring exploits excite the orator to give expression to feelings of lofty praise and deep admiration; under those fervid impressions he eulogizes the old veterans in solemn and touching words. The presence of Lafayette, his heroic disinterestedness and his illustrious career in America in the cause of the struggling patriots bring forth from the orator the highest tributes of gratitude and respect; he addresses the hero in terms scarcely equaled in beauty and strength.

Webster treats numerous other topics: Such as the universal progress of the world in moral and physical enlightenment; the Revolution of South America, etc., always with that same vigorous power of expression which characterizes all his orations. I strongly believe that this magnificent speech alone would have forever illustrated Webster and given him a place among the world's great orators, for in it are embodied all the constituents of a splendid masterpiece. The subject was a most worthy one, and Webster has moulded and worked into it circumstances that are most appropriate to it.

We find exhibited throughout vast intellectual powers, deep and tender affections, a rich and fervid imagination; but the orator has the full mastery over his subject and is never carried away by it.

His sentences are mighty and dignified, his style the purest and most charming; in a word, "Webster touched his highest point in the difficult task of commemorative oratory." In conclusion, I may remark, that as a means of developing in them their growing aptitudes, it will prove an excellent model in the hands of students desirous of attaining a high degree of perfection in oratory.

RUDOLPH RICHER, '03.



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## EDITORIAL.

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Knowledge is derived chiefly from two sources: personal observation and intercourse with those who are better and wiser than ourselves. Our sphere of observation is so limited in its range and so circumscribed, especially in youth, that but few are able to draw from this source much valuable knowledge.

If, then, we would learn to think noble thoughts and elevate our souls into a purer atmosphere of intellectual life, we must commune with the wise and good. We must sit at the feet of some sage and learn wisdom from his lips.

But where find this sage, this oracle, able and willing to teach us the wisdom we seek? Are any of our friends or acquaintances able to perform this service for us? Yes, the wisest sages, truest friends and those who would be our most intimate acquaintances are patiently and earnestly entreating us to listen to their teaching.

Good books, "containing the hived wisdom of ages," are ever at our disposal. Behind the two boards that bind them, we can speak to the wisest men that ever lived. "They will talk to us," says Ruskin, "in the best words they can choose, and of the things nearest their hearts."

Minds illuminated by the light of genius and surpassing in keenness the glance of the eagle's eye, have left in their books the living, burning thoughts of their souls. These are the inexhaustible mines from which the golden ore of knowledge must be drawn. They are the God appointed teachers of mankind, for great men are gifts of God sent on earth to make truth and righteousness prevail over falsehood and sin.

In reading the sublime productions of these master spirits, we are unconsciously purified and ennobled. Our souls, like clay in the hands of the potter, are moulded into forms of truth and beauty of which we before had no conception. Nature lies



before us stripped of all its grossness and clothed with such lofty grandeur, that we must needs be drawn to worship its Almighty Maker. Their words are like flames of fire, consuming all that is base within us and fitting us for the higher and nobler duties of life.

No one can be great and noble who does not in some manner enjoy the company of the great and noble. Men instinctively feel this to be true. Hence some, mistaking the semblance of nobility for nobility itself, court the society of those who are decked with the empty trappings of outward pomp. They spend their lives in fawning upon those who have nothing to give and perhaps even despise them. Base spirits these, incapable of seeing that all true greatness lies within.

Earnestness of purpose, purity of intention, faith, hope and love, these are what constitute the truly great man, whatever be his condition of life or accident of birth. Every great author possesses these qualities in a eminent degree. Hence their power to uplift, to inspire, to transform those who come within the charmed circle of their influence.

Philosophers and poets, saints and sages would gladly take us by the hand and lead us through the pleasant fields of knowledge; and shall we ignore such company to follow the common herd of vain babblers?

How few there are who love the society of the illustrious dead, and how much smaller still is the number of those who try to fit themselves for fellowship in this society of earth's noblest sons? There are, it is true, countless thousands who devour a certain class of novels by the hundred and fancy themselves intelligent readers and highly cultured persons, but they cannot in the best sense of the word be said to read at all. If reading is to be of any benefit to the mind it must be accompanied by some mental effort. But the readers we are now speaking of, make no effort and consequently derive no benefit from their reading. They are merely passive recipients of vague, indefinite impressions.

In fact, novel reading, as a rule, does not call into play the higher faculties of the mind. It is thus described by W. D. Howells, who is himself one of the leading novelists of the present day and should therefore know whereof he speaks: 'It may be safely assumed that most of the novel reading, which people fancy is an intellectual pastime, is the emptiest dissipation, hardly more related to thought or the wholesome exercise of



the mental faculties than opium eating; in either case, the brain is drugged and left weaker and crazier by the debauch. If this may be called the negative result of the fiction habit, the positive injury which most novels work is by no means so easily to be measured in the case of young men, whose character they help so much to form or *de-form*."

Reading, when rightly understood, is in no sense a mere pastime. To be serviceable it must be a mental discipline. All the faculties must be brought to bear on the subject we are reading. If it degenerates into a mere amusement it ceases to be beneficial and may become endlessly harmful. Ruskin lays down the true rule for reading when he says: "First of all I tell you earnestly and authoritatively (I know I am right in this), you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words and assuring yourself of their meaning syllable by syllable, nay, letter by letter. You might read all the books in the British museum (if you could live long enough), and remain an utterly illiterate uneducated person; but if you read ten pages of a good book letter by letter—that is to say, with real accuracy—you are forevermore in some sense an educated person."

Reading after this manner is something more than a means of passing a few pleasant hours. It will do for the mind what outdoor exercise does for the body—give it strength and suppleness.

The multiplicity of books seems to render a choice difficult, but in reality it is not so. The number of good books is comparatively small, and whoever reads with a purpose will soon learn to know and love them.

W. J. COSTIGAN.

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#### PERSONAL.

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—It is always with genuine pleasure that we hear of the success of former students, but when the successful one has been a former editor of *THE VIATORIAN* and an old classmate, we feel almost as if we had achieved a personal triumph. This pleasure was recently afforded us when we learned from his father that Mr. P. W. Hansl, '99, had carried off the first honors of his class at Yale University. We learn from the same source that Mr. Hansl is one of the competitors for the "Poetry Medal," which has not been awarded for several years because the faculty did not consider the productions up to the required standard. Those who



have read Mr. Hansl's poetic contributions to THE VIATORIAN during the past three years need not be told that he has received no mean gifts from the muses. We wish the former editor of THE VIATORIAN, and our old classmate, the fullest measure of success.

—Rev. Father Lamarre, '95, Chicago, recently visited his *alma mater* and spent a pleasant day renewing old acquaintances. Father Lamarre, both as a student and professor, has made for himself a host of friends at the college, who are always pleased to meet him.

—Mr. T. A. Cahill, the former colonel of The S.V.C. Battalion, has gone to Chicago University to pursue a course in medicine. We wish our old friend success in his chosen profession.

—We learn with pleasure that Rev. J. Hayden, '95, was ordained to the holy priesthood during the Christmas holidays. The reverend vice-president, J. F. Ryan, C.S.V., went to Wilmington to assist as sub-deacon at his first holy mass. THE VIATORIAN offers its congratulations to the young priest and its best wishes for a happy and useful career in the sacred ministry.

—The following reverend gentlemen were the guests of the reverend president during the past month—Reverend Fathers Helkake, Fowler, Ind.; Bergeron, Chicago, Ill.; McDevitt, Chicago; Sixt, Granger and Poissont, Kankakee, Ill.; Bourdeau, Manteno, Ill.; Lesage, Brighton, Ill., and Cregan, C.S.V., Chicago.

—Mr. Frank Caron, the father of Alphonsus Caron of the senior department, died during the Christmas holidays. We extend our most sincere sympathy to our fellow student and his afflicted family. Mr. Caron was an upright citizen, a good and kind father and an exemplary Christian.

—We also offer our condolence to Mr. J. Armstrong, of the seminary department, whose mother died recently.

—Two new professors have been added to the staff of teachers: Mr. Rowe, formerly of St. Louis, and Mr. Kelly, a graduate of the conservatory of music of Cincinnati. Mr. Kelly, besides directing the choir will assist Reverend Brother Goulette in the musical department.

—We congratulate the Very Rev. J. McCann, an old alumnus, on his appointment to the irremovable rectorship of the church at Elgin, Ill.



—The sisters of Notre Dame Academy have just closed a very successful fair. Electric lights have been placed in the academy. A complete system of water works will soon be added.

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#### EXCHANGES.

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The *Davidson College Magazine* has always occupied an honorable position among college journals, but, in our opinion, its December issue reaches a higher degree of literary excellence than any number we have yet seen. The essay on Theocritus is evidently a tribute of affection which the writer gladly pays to the father of idyllic song. The writer has evidently studied his author to some purpose, for there is about his own style a freshness, a beauty and charming simplicity, which, without being slavish imitation, comes from a close study of models like unto Theocritus. There are two other articles worthy of notice which appear in this number: "Intellectual Greatness," and "Euphuism." Both are thoughtful, well written papers. The only weak and pointless bit of writing in the magazine is a story entitled—"Veni, Vidi, Victus Sum." In this the writer makes a wofully unsuccessful attempt at being humorous. It seems to us that he shows bad taste both in the subject he selects for trying his hand at humor and also in his mode of proceeding.

*The University of Ottawa Review* is usually a very sedate, dignified and self-contained periodical. We were, therefore, the more surprised to find a writer in its pages giving vent to an unprovoked fit of passion. The author of "A New Literary Power," in the December issue, pours out the vials of his wrath upon those whom he is pleased to term "praise-mongers." "That parasitical humbug," he says, "the praise-monger, is a compound of about equal parts of cowardice and insincerity," etc. According to Webster's dictionary, praise is "commendation for worth, approval of merit: honor rendered because of excellence or worth." The giving of praise is, consequently, always an act of simple justice and truth. The writer evidently means flattery or adulation, which are something very different. A little less passion and a little more accuracy in the use of words would become the writer much better. "He who praises everybody, praises nobody," would be a very fine paradox; did it not lack one very essential requisite—good sense. He who praises every-



body must praise some who have real merit and who are consequently worthy of the commendation bestowed upon them.

The *Abbey Student* is one of the very best college journals on our exchange list. We always look forward to its arrival with pleasure because we are sure to find in its pages much that has permanent value. It is, perhaps, a little heavy, but, in our opinion, this instead of being a fault is to its credit. It shows that the students are occupied with serious topics of thought and that serious questions are not incapable of interesting them. There is but one article, "Bout Skyloans," which, it seems to us, is unworthy of the space it occupies in the *Abbey Student*. It is humorous with all the humor extracted and some kind of a barbarous lingo offered as a substitute. Keep to your old standards, dear *Abbey Student*. There is no dearth of scribblers who can supply all the nonsense the market demands. A poem entitled, "To Luna," is as fine a bit of verse making as we have seen in a college journal for some time. Many poems not half so well done find their way into the magazines.

We welcome to our sanctum *The Bee* from St. Jerome's College, Berlin, Ont. *The Bee* is an unpretentious little journal as bright and interesting as it is unpretentious. There is not a dull or feeble article in the December number.

We are by no means opposed to honest, sensible criticism which applies the laws of literary criticism, established by the masters, to literary productions and shows wherein they are defective, by pointing out their departure from these standards. On the contrary, we believe this is one of the most valuable services one college journal can render another. But we are not quite prepared to accept the "*ipse dixit*" of every tyro whose boundless self-conceit leads him to believe that his taste is the ultimate criterion of literary worth.

We respectfully submit these few considerations to the "ex-man" of *The Carolinian*, who seems to be laboring under the delusion that a college journal not modeled on *The Carolinian* is below the standard. In the October issue of this journal, the exchange editor takes us to task because the June number of THE VIATORIAN is largely made up of orations delivered by the students, and our critic consequently does not find therein "a single short story."

Now, our June issue was a commencement number, and as a matter of course was devoted mainly to commencement exer-



cises. We believe, as a rule, orations by distinguished visitors and by the students themselves are the most important feature on such occasions in many colleges and universities, and furthermore, that many of the best college papers in the country issue commencement numbers containing these orations.

But we would like to know where this would-be dictator gets the idea that a short story is evidence of greater literary ability than a "well digested essay" or a carefully prepared oration. We have always been led to believe that the essay is a higher, more enduring and valuable form of literature than the short story. It seems, however, we were mistaken, according to the editor of *The Carolinian*. To prove that his college journal has made giant strides towards perfection, he offers this argument: "Formerly but few short stories appeared in its columns, the contents consisting largely of well-digested essays; and the result, *of course*, was that but relatively little interest was manifested in the journal by a large majority of the students and friends of the college. In more recent years, however, this defect has been remedied." \* \* \* It is evident from this quotation that essays are held in slight esteem at South Carolina College, and that the short story occupies a higher rank as a literary production. But the editors of *The Carolinian* must excuse us if we refuse to accept their judgment in this matter. Why it must follow as a matter *of course* that college students should find little or no interest in *well digested* essays, we are unable to see. That small boys should be thus affected, does not excite surprise. Their minds are not sufficiently developed to grasp the thought of the essay, but they are able to appreciate a story—short or long—which has plenty of excitement. But why older students, who have a more serious purpose than spending a few hours pleasantly, should have the same standard of value, we leave *The Carolinian* to decide.

With all due respect to the editors of the *Carolinian*—they are certainly better judges as to what actually most interests the large majority of the students of their college than we are—but in our opinion the single essay, which appears in their October number, is far more interesting and instructive reading than all the short stories that occupy the pages of their journal. The essay is thoughtful, well written and painstaking which is more than can be said for the stories. If the *rot* contained in "Uncle Frank's Love Affair," and a "Negro Wedding," be the



kind of stuff which, in the opinion of the *Carolinian* "ex-man," goes to make a "first-class" college journal, then we are perfectly willing to remain below the standard of such a criterion. But we will refrain from further criticism of the literary department of this journal because it might appear as if we merely wished to even up matters.

We would not have noticed the remarks of *The Carolinian*, had we not perceived a tendency in a few of our exchanges to erect arbitrary standards of criticism and brazenly condemn whatever does not conform to them. "It," (THE VIATORIAN), says our critic, "contains only four articles, and, of this number, three are on the subject of eloquence." A very good subject it seems to us. The highest form of oratory is, according to Dr. Mathews, "not only a delight, but a power, and a power greater than kings or military chieftains can command." And in the opinion of the same author no subject is more worthy of careful study. Whatever may have been the worth of the orations delivered on the eloquence of various nations, our critic was wrong in finding fault with the subject. Had he shown wherein the treatment of this subject was defective, we would not have had a word to say against his criticism, but we are not disposed to accept his dictation as to the subjects which should be treated in our journal. He prefers the short story to the essay. Very well, let him try to make this predominate, as it really does, in his college paper; we will not quarrel with him about his taste, but he must not try to impose his taste on all.

Our critic also finds fault with the small amount of literary matter contained in THE VIATORIAN. "It contains," he says, "only four articles." If he had taken the trouble to examine carefully he would have discovered that there is almost as much literary matter in it as in *The Carolinian*, notwithstanding the disparity in size. The June number of THE VIATORIAN contained only twenty pages of printed matter outside the advertisements, and yet it contains fifteen pages of literary matter, leaving only five pages for local items. *The Carolinian*, for October, contains fifty pages of printed matter, of which twenty-three pages only are devoted to literary articles. We have long ago discovered that bulk is no sign of excellence.

There are several other points in the criticism of *The Carolinian*, which we intended to examine, but we have already exhausted the space at our disposal. We assure our critic, we bear him not the slightest ill-will. We believe he intends to be



fair and we shall certainly be glad to hear from him again. We are in favor of the fullest and freest discussion among college journals and the honest and unbiased expression of opinion. But opinion is worth no more than the reasons on which it is based, with these it must stand or fall.

W. J. COSTIGAN.

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VIATORIANA.

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—Cheese.

—Flumigation.

—Now I go up stairs.

—You'll have to hurry.

—It is I that you can count on to play billiards.

—Put dem two together what ought to be together.

—When you get done don't forget to make the lights out.

—*First Student*—Say, will you go skating with me today?

*Second Student*—Oh, go on; you're getting icy.

—*First Senior*—What are you limping about?

*Second Senior*—Why, I was out bicycle riding yesterday and hurt my hind leg.

—*Professor*—What are the colors of the spectrum?

*Student*—Red, white and blue.

—*Professor*—What is the meaning of the word "mosaic"?

*Student*—Why, pertaining to Moses.

—*Minim*—Mr. —, what is the difference between a black and a white kitten?

*Philosopher*—Why there is no difference, they are both kittens.

—*First Theologian*—(At dinner table)What have we for deserts today?

*Second Theologian*—Why apples, I believe.

*First Theologian*—O, I am going up stairs and play billiards.

—C.—What kind of ribbon is that you are wearing, George?

G.—Dewey ribbon. C.—What kind of ribbon is that?

G.—Why the kind that doesn't run, of course.

—Why doesn't Mr. G. learn to play billiards? Because he would have to use English.



## A HOME-SICK STUDENT'S SOLILOQUY.

*With apologies to Shakespeare.*

To stay, or not to stay? That is the question:  
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to endure  
 The jeers and jibes of outrageous professors,  
 Or to take to the farm from this sea of troubles,  
 And by escaping end them? to fly—to skip!  
 No more; and by absconding, say we end  
 The headaches and the thousand other ills  
 This place is heir to—'tis a peregrination  
 Devoutly to be wished. To fly—to skip!  
 Go home! perchance to work! aye, there's the rub.  
 For in that cornfield what work may come,  
 When we have passed beyond these shelt'ring walls  
 Must give us pain! there's the prospect  
 That makes us stick to this long, weary strife;  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of drill  
 The professor's wrong, the prefect's contumely,  
 The pangs of "minim love" displayed so free,  
 The insolence of profs. and the spurns  
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
 When he himself might his quietus make  
 With a skedaddle? Who would "exams." bear,  
 And grunt and sweat for a scant seventy-five?  
 But the forebodings of the toil to come  
 In the chigger-covered country, from whose corn  
 The weeds are never gone, puzzles the will,  
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
 Than fly to others we know too well of?  
 This laziness makes cowards of us all,  
 And thus the home-sick student's resolution  
 Is sicklied o'er by this great afterthought;—  
 And the stratagems of the weary moment,  
 With this regard, their purpose turn away  
 And lose the name of action.

M. J. M.

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